

How We Changed Our Input

Last August we returned from our summer travels in Europe and made some dramatic changes to how we fed and cared for our bodies. Twelve months later not only have we kept up the changes we made—I think we have even improved on them.



Why we did it

- With my growing practice and longer hours I had felt increasingly overwhelmed by the limited time I had to prepare healthy meals in the way I had done in previous years.
- We began to compensate by eating out or turning to more processed food items to save time.
- We struggled to free time for a daily family exercise program, we believed in since we lost 1-2 hours pre & post meal in the kitchen each evening.
- Joachim had just read Chris Crowley's, **Younger Next Year** and was motivated to get serious about exercise while I had read **The Raw Food Solution** by Mizpah Matus which came highly recommended by one of my mentors. Both books caught our attention and had us talking.
- With a preteen in the house we knew we only had a few limited years, if that, for him to experience a cleaner, healthier, and simpler approach that he may one day borrow from.
- Finally, and most significantly, was a week with my mentor Dr. Soescu in Romania where I was exposed first hand to a drastically simpler way to eat healthy. It was an approach she and colleagues practiced in her clinic and she carried out at home.

The changes we made

- Eliminated all dairy and packaged, processed foods other than bulk items such as rice, quinoa, millet, lentils, beans. (We already kept a gluten free and vegetarian kitchen.)
- Replaced our German-style fruit and muesli breakfast with raw fruit only smoothies, juices and/or whole fresh fruit.
- Added a raw vegetable salad as a first course to every dinner followed by variations of either roasted vegetables, vegetable soups, or vegetable & grain dishes.
- Lunch evolved naturally as leftovers from the evening meal or a continuation of breakfast fruits

What it required

- A new shopping strategy. More frequent but certainly quicker trips—mostly in and out to the produce section. We shared this task.
- Cooking/prepping ahead for 4 of the 5 weekday meals became a family event on Sundays.
- Setting up a smoothie/juicing station in our kitchen with all we needed right at hand—cutting board, knives, large bowls or platters. We began with this **Vita-mix** and have since added this **Omega Juicer**.

The benefits we experienced

- Improved our body's ability to eliminate – our output!
- Able to get in a pre-dinner swim and after dinner walk!
- Happier Lauren each evening = Happier Family
- Eliminated cravings by 95%, nothing a piece of dark chocolate or **coconut chia pudding** can't fix.
- Wake alert each morning, and clear headed. Reduced caffeine intake dramatically.
- All of us stayed flu and virus free all year.

- Our Clearer Heads = More Creative Minds
- Seriously loving what we are eating and we know we are nourishing our bodies not just filling them.

Three Challenges we faced

- Keeping enough fresh produce available without over buying and having it spoil.
- Increasing “warming” foods during winter especially this past exceptionally cold Austin winter.
- My German mother-in-law who is skeptically curious but occasionally states I am likely starving her son and grandson. ☺

Why I think this change worked

- We made a team effort. All of us got on board and stayed there.
- We believed in what we were doing. We had read enough and shared the same belief system regarding the body’s need to clean itself.
- We saw and felt the changes—immediately!
- It simplified our domestic tasks which gave us more time to play and be creative.
- There were also unexpected secondary benefits such as increased energy and motivation, a gradual opening to new perspectives on areas we had felt stuck, and the joy of being on this adventure together.